

In the Claims

10. (currently amended) A stepping machine, comprising:  
a frame designed to rest upon a floor surface;  
a left crank and a right crank, wherein each said crank is rotatably mounted on said frame;  
a left foot support and a right foot support;  
a left guide and a right guide, wherein each said guide is mounted on the frame for movement in oscillatory fashion relative thereto; and  
a left link ~~foot support~~ and a right link ~~foot support~~, wherein each said link ~~foot support~~ has ~~a first~~ an intermediate portion connected ~~linked~~ to a respective crank, a first end portion connected to a respective foot support, and a second end portion connected ~~linked~~ to a respective guide in such a manner that rotation of said cranks is linked to movement of a person's feet through adjacent, generally elliptical paths that have a horizontal component and a relatively greater vertical component.

11-20. (cancelled)

21. (currently amended) The stepping machine of claim 10 ~~18~~, wherein each said foot support ~~platform~~ is rotatably mounted on a respective link and constrained to remain within a limited range of orientations during rotation of each crank ~~bar~~.

22. (currently amended) The stepping machine of claim 10, wherein each said guide is a rocker link having a first end pivotally connected to the frame at a common pivot axis on the frame, and an opposite, second end pivotally connected to a respective link ~~foot support~~.

23. (currently amended) The stepping machine of claim 10, wherein each said guide is a rocker link having a first end that is sized and configured for grasping, an intermediate portion pivotally connected to the frame at a common pivot axis on the frame, and an opposite, second end pivotally connected to a respective link ~~foot support~~.

24. (cancelled)

25. (newly added) The stepping machine of claim 10, wherein each said foot support is rotatably mounted on a respective link and constrained to remain in a fixed orientation during rotation of each crank.